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the information of the public and that copies of them should be made available at a moderate price.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

2. Suggesting a new budget of expenditure and taxation.

Mr. G. Venkatarama Iyer (Member, T. I. C., Vaikom) began to read a paper containing his observations on the Delhi Darbar. The Dewan having told him that it had no connection of any kind with his subject, he next took up the question of what he called the Reserve Fund. He said that, since the year 1083, there were recurring surpluses every year in the State. But he thought that it was not sufficient to maintain an equilibrium. Every State or Government ought to be prepared for possible emergencies, such as foreign wars and internal rebellions and famine and pestilence. Fortunately for Travancore, the responsiblity of declaring war and peace rested with the British Government, and so long as the annual subsidy of 8 lakhs of rupees was paid, not a single pie need be spent in maintaining a well-trained army or a strong navy. In regard to the other contingency, *viz.*, famine, he said that, looking into the history of famine in Travancore, the only recorded famine was that of 1036. Under the favourable conditions that existed in Travancore, there was no need for any apprehension on account of famine. There was, therefore, no necessity for any very strong Reserve Fund in Travancore. Still, with a view to meet unforseen contingencies, he would propose a Reserve Fund of 3 lakhs of rupees annually. He added that there should be no difficulty for the State to find any extra funds that might be required at any time from the accumulated treasure of the Devaswoms, as was done in the year 1855 A. D.

He next dealt with the evils of financial surpluses. In the present constitution of the Government, the people had no voice in regulating the expenditure of the State. It also received no sort of check either in the Legislative Council or in the Popular Assembly. If there had been an Executive Council, that would have been useful in checking the expenditure. Almost every department of the State had been re-organised and the expenditure under "salaries and establishment charges" increased by leaps and bounds. He was compelled to say that the expenditure in many of the departments, such as Public Works and Police, was extravagant, and, considering the galloping speed at which the expenditure was increasing out of all proportion to the State revenue, the out-look looked very frightening. But turning to the people, they were groaning under ever-increasing burdens, such as registration fees, court fees, stamp fees, school fees, tolls and ferry charges. During the past five years, the school fees had been raised on three occasions. The steady financial surpluses and the capabilities of the State to bear increased expenditure could not therefore be taken to indicate the prosperity of the country. His object in taking up the subject was to suggest a new budget of expenditure for the State. His original idea was to bring down the budget of expenditure from 134 to 87 lakhs of rupees, but it was not possible to bring a galloping horse to a trot all at once. He, therefore, proposed that the budget of expenditure be immediately reduced to 111 lakhs of rupees a year and that that amount should be left unaltered for a period of five years. He then

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proceeded to take department after department and suggest the budget allotments for each and the reasons for so fixing them. He said that he would leave alone the subsidy to the British Government as it was quite a justifiable expenditure and the State got more than its worth in return. Six and odd lakhs of rupees now expended for the Palace was also necessary. Taking next the Devaswoms and Charitable Institutions, he was for increasing the expenditure to 15 lakhs of rupees per year. He began to consider the grounds of assumption by the State of the several Devaswoms under its management. In accordance with the direction of the Dewan, the Member passed over that point and observed that the State was only in the position of a trustee to those Devaswoms. In their order re-organising the Devaswom Department, the Government had held the view that there was much of unnecessary and wasteful expenditure in the *purathepaditharams* of the Devaswoms. He demurred to that view and said that, in the capacity of a trustee, it was incumbent on the Government to respect the intentions of the donor and maintain intact the *pathivus* originally fixed. The object of the donor in prescribing costly feasts, a certain number of torches and lights, &c., was admittedly of a religious nature and for the salvation of the soul, and the Government had no right to curtail such expenditure in any way. The *purathepaditharams* should therefore be left undisturbed in the same way as the *akathepaditharams*. He also said that the proposed separation of the Devaswom properties at the present time was useless and impracticable. There were innumerable difficulties attending on such separation and the Member wished to bring them all to the notice of the Government.

At that stage, the Dewan told the Member that that again was a point which had no direct bearing on the subject that stood against his name and enquired how much more remained in his memorandum. The Member having replied that he had just finished about a fourth of what he had to say, the Dewan asked him to wind up and finish the whole in a few more minutes.

The Member left off the Devaswom question and discussed at some length the object and function of the Popular Assembly. In the matter of criticisms on questions of expenditure and other important administrative questions, the time for criticism invariably came after the expenditure was incurred and after the G. O.'s were issued. He questioned the soundness of the policy and observed that, after the incurring of the expenditure and the solution of the questions, the criticisms by the Assembly Members came too late and served no useful purpose. The creation of the Assembly was to ensure good government. He therefore suggested that all such questions should be referred to the Members and the draft Budget put into their hands *before* they were finally passed.

Dewan.—I am very sorry to interrupt you, and the Members of the Assembly will bear with me when I say that I never interrupt any Member or prevent him from having his full say. You have taken an inordinately long time over your subject, and, in fairness to the other Members, I am constrained to ask you to stop now and hand over your memorandum, which will receive due consideration.

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